

We will have the opportunity to discuss those in the future.

Mr. President, we are back for a short period of time. It is real clear, in terms of what we have to accomplish. We are not going to be doing a lot of new business because we have much unfinished business to do.

I do welcome my colleagues back. Over the next several days there will be opportunity for tributes for Senators who are retiring and leaving this body. The Democratic caucus just had their leadership elections and I want to congratulate each one of those new leaders and will do so formally, not quite now but a little bit later, in phone calls to them. We have our leadership elections tomorrow. I look forward, leadership to leadership, to working in a vigorous, robust way to accomplish the agenda before the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is no unanimous consent required. The Senator is authorized to speak for 5 minutes.

FINDING COMMON GROUND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened closely to the comments made by the majority leader, Senator FRIST, a man whom I respect and with whom I have worked over the past several years and look forward to working with again in this new Congress.

The Presidential election is completed. The people have spoken. A few moments ago the Democratic Senators gathered just a few feet from this Chamber in the Old Senate Chamber where we had an election of our new leaders for the upcoming Congress. In that meeting was Senator JOHN KERRY, who was our standard-bearer in the last election. We are all extremely proud of the job he did. Both he and Senator EDWARDS covered the United States, crisscrossed it from every corner, taking their message to the American people. The outcome was very close. When it was all said and done, President Bush had emerged the clear winner. The day after the election Senator KERRY and Senator EDWARDS conceded to the President and Vice President.

We now have a question before us as to which direction this Nation is headed. It is a question that is going to be dramatized even more by the recent resignations of key members of President Bush's Cabinet. It will now be up to the President and his close advisers to decide the team that he will put on the field for the next 4 years to serve and represent the American people.

The President will also have an opportunity and responsibility to develop an agenda, an agenda of issues to bring before the Congress.

At an early point the President will have to make threshold decisions. Will

he make decisions in terms of his leadership team, an agenda where we will try to find a bipartisan approach to solving our problems, or will we separate as we have in the past? I sincerely hope the President chooses the former and not the latter. It will be a better service to our country if we sit down on a bipartisan basis and address some of the serious issues we face.

On foreign policy, we can't escape the stubborn realities. We still have the ongoing threat from terrorists. The war in Iraq and Afghanistan is far from over. We face a nuclear North Korea. Our military concerns stretch across the world from Saudi Arabia to the Philippines. Our military is stretched to the limit, and our resources are constrained by record deficits which we have seen during the last several years in the Bush administration.

On the home front, the President's policies raise questions about the future of Social Security and whether we can trust it to continue to pay as it has in the past, and our ability to invest in America and the many freedoms we value which Senator FRIST talked about earlier. That is an issue that is front and center in my State of Illinois.

As I traveled across the Nation, I heard concern about the cost of health insurance from business leaders, families, and individuals alike. In the last 4 years absolutely nothing has been proposed from the administration to deal with the cost of health insurance. I hope the President will come forward with a good, sensible plan. A good starting place might be the Federal Employees Benefit Health Plan, a plan that covers millions of Federal employees and which offers them an enormous variety of options for health insurance at reasonable costs. That is a model we should use to offer the same insurance to small businesses and the American people.

Senator FRIST spoke of the Medicare prescription drug plan. This plan has been very coldly received by seniors across America. They cannot understand why Congress couldn't pass something that was understandable and which would truly help them. The Medicare prescription drug plan as passed by the Congress is so bad that we postponed its effective date until after this election. Those who wrote it knew if seniors saw exactly what we had proposed, they would rise up in opposition to it. They are learning that when you give everything to the pharmaceutical companies and you don't protect the seniors, you don't solve the problem.

We have a lot to do in the months and years ahead. I hope we can do this on a bipartisan basis. It would be a value to this country to see us come together. But it will start with leadership from the White House, and decisions by the President which can bring us together.

We have stood together, Democrats and Republicans, on the declaration of

the Afghanistan war, No Child Left Behind, intelligence reform, Sarbanes-Oxley, a bill to reform corporate governance, and also the approval of 201 of the President's proposed 211 judicial nominees. There has been good cooperation in many areas. If the President's party expects Senate Democrats to walk away from their basic values, I don't think that is going to occur.

I listened in this caucus we left and I wondered if some of the writers who said since the election the Democrats were adrift listened to the Democratic Senators. We understand their values. They are American values, and they are values which we take to the American people in each of our own States.

I look forward to working with our friends on the Republican side of the aisle in trying to find common ground, which is so important. We believe that on critical matters of personal responsibility and freedom we should have an honest resolution. We also believe that caring for the less fortunate is a moral value and most major religions should be respected. I look forward to the upcoming Congress and I hope we can find the common ground.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

APPRECIATION OF PAUL NITZE

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I wish to speak for a very few minutes to recognize and reflect on the extraordinary career in public service of Paul Nitze who died on October 21, since the Congress recessed.

Paul Nitze was probably the paragon of the private citizen rendering public service at the request of his government. His service was rendered to Democratic and Republican Presidents alike.

Paul Nitze was first summoned to Washington in 1940 by James V. Forrestal, his former boss at the New York investment bank where both had worked. Once in Washington, Nitze became involved in a variety of activities leading up to and supporting America's efforts in World War II. He helped draft the Selective Service Act. He served as chief of the Metals and Minerals Branch of the Board of Economic Warfare. He oversaw foreign procurement of goods and services for the U.S. Government.

From 1944 to 1946, Nitze served as vice-chairman of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, which studied the impact of U.S. bombing in Europe and Japan after we had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This office applied rigorous analytical methods to assess the effectiveness of weapons and tactic in World War II. It was the forerunner of today's Program Analysis and Evaluation Office on the Pentagon.

After the war, the scope of Paul Nitze's contributions continued to expand. He headed a billion-dollar global